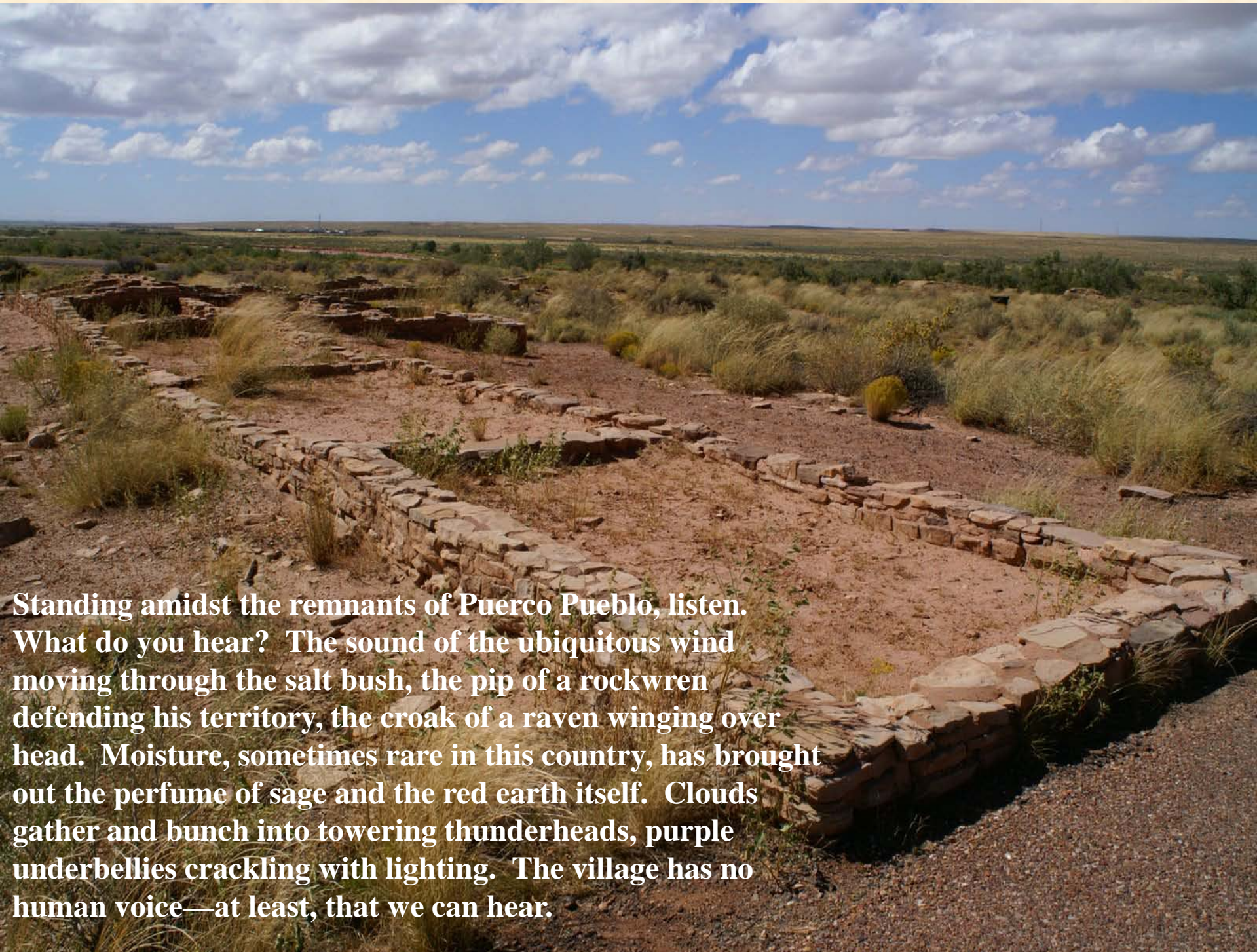


# National American Indian Heritage Month

**This month, we celebrate the rich cultural traditions of American Indians and recognize the vital contributions these groups have made to the strength and diversity of our society.**



**Standing amidst the remnants of Puerco Pueblo, listen. What do you hear? The sound of the ubiquitous wind moving through the salt bush, the pip of a rockwren defending his territory, the croak of a raven winging over head. Moisture, sometimes rare in this country, has brought out the perfume of sage and the red earth itself. Clouds gather and bunch into towering thunderheads, purple underbellies crackling with lighting. The village has no human voice—at least, that we can hear.**



**Eroding from the protective earth, artifacts bring to light cultures that have passed through and occupied this region. There are over 700 archaeology sites within park boundaries, thousands throughout the region. It is a rich tapestry of human history, from 10,000 years ago to the present. The American Indian heritage of the area is not limited to the past. Many cultures continue to live in the Southwest, including four main groups of people near Petrified Forest National Park: the Apache, Hopi, Navajo, and Zuni.**



Many of these people told stories of the Petrified Forest. The Southern Paiute tell of the warrior Wolf God who dropped his broken arrows, seen today as the sections of petrified wood scattered across the land. The hero twins of the Navajo fought Yei-tso, killing the monster and leaving his bones as the petrified logs. Petrified wood became a tool and commodity, the earliest discovered in the park dating from approximately 8000 B.C., made by the Folsom Culture out of pretty pink and white petrified wood.



Take a walk at the south end of the park to Agate House. This small structure was built about 800 years ago out of large chunks of the abundant petrified wood by the Ancestral Pueblo People. It is easy to imagine living in the little building, overlooking rustling fields of corn in the small valley below.





# Hopi—*Hopiitu*



Farming and gardening have been essential elements of Hopi culture for over a thousand years. These agricultural activities also reinforce traditions and customs in each new generation, for as one Hopi gardener said, "*This is not about growing vegetables; it is about growing kids.*" The Hopi agricultural cycle serves as a guide for their annual ceremonial life.

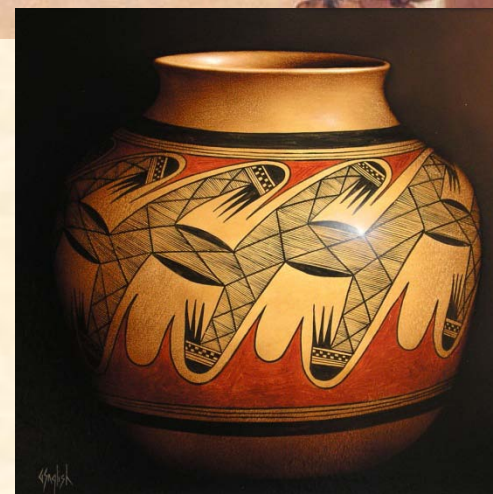


Of the villages of the three Hopi Mesas, Oraibi (Orayvi) is the oldest continuously-inhabited village in North America. The Hopi and their ancestors, the Ancestral Puebloan People (called Hisatsinom by the Hopi) have continuously occupied this region for more than a millennium. The Hopi (along with the Zuni) consider Puerco Pueblo in Petrified Forest National Park an ancestral site.

The contemporary artwork of the Hopi reflects the beautiful carvings, textiles, pottery, and baskets of their ancestors. Today visitors search out Hopi artwork as well as the traditional ceremonies, particularly the Katsina dances.



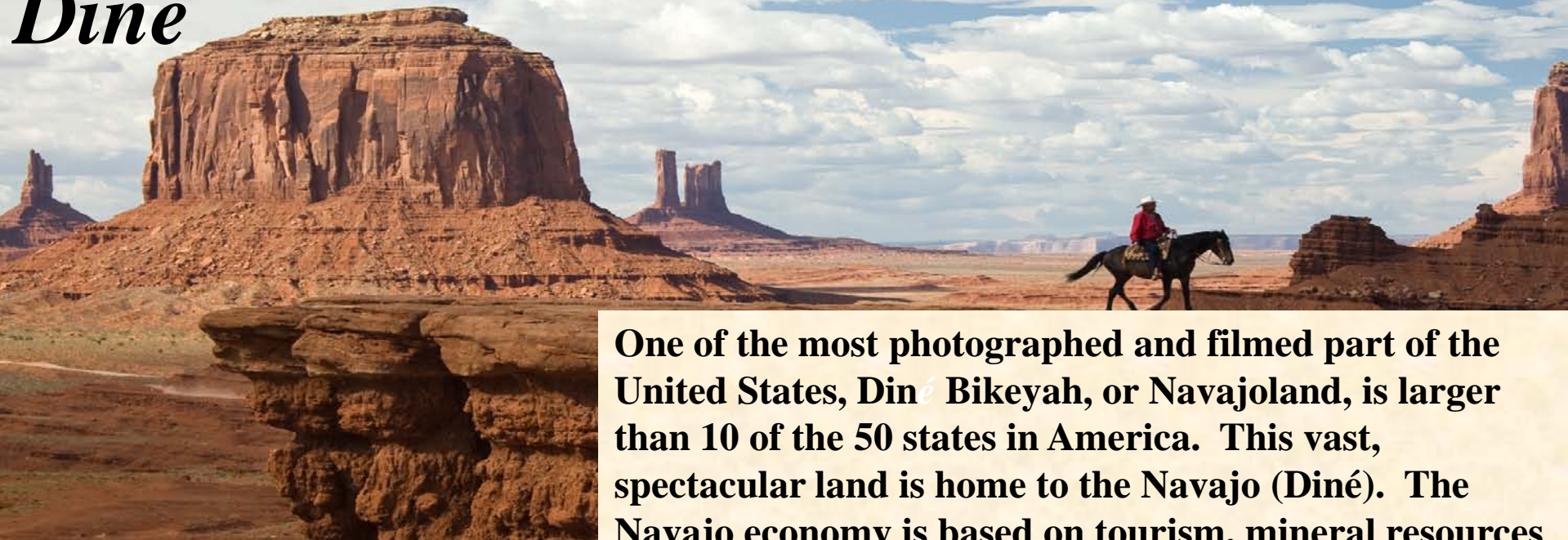
Traditional knowledge is central to Hopi culture. For the Hopi, traditional knowledge explains not only the origin of all peoples but provides lessons for how to live today.





# Navajo

## *Diné*



One of the most photographed and filmed part of the United States, Diné Bikeyah, or Navajoland, is larger than 10 of the 50 states in America. This vast, spectacular land is home to the Navajo (Diné). The Navajo economy is based on tourism, mineral resources (oil, natural gas, coal, and uranium), and farming.

The Navajo are also well known for their fine silversmithing, basketry, and masterful weaving. Sandpainting, a unique and symbolic art form originating with the Holy People, was and still is primarily ceremonial.

Many Navajo follow traditional beliefs. Their traditional world is surrounded by four sacred peaks, Mt. Taylor, San Francisco Peak, Blanca Peak, and the La Plata Range. There are more than 50 different kinds of ceremonies that may be used in the Navajo culture. Some ceremonies last several hours, while others may last as long as nine days.



Ninety-seven percent of adult Navajos speak the Navajo language. Traditional homes, *hogans*, can be seen throughout the Navajo Nation. While many Navajos follow traditional beliefs and ways, they are a vital modern people, highly involved in the communities throughout the region.



# White Mountain Apache

## *Ndee*

South of the park, the White Mountains are part of the largest continuous forest of ponderosa pine in the world. Steep canyons delve deep below peaks reaching towards the sky. Streams scintillating with trout bisect alpine meadows punctuated with wildflowers. Shadowed forests sweet with the perfume of pine, splashed with golden aspen, ring with elk bugling. Over a million and a half acres of this ancestral homeland is occupied by today's White Mountain Apache.

There are many different nations of Apache people; the White Mountain Apache are Western Apache, closely related to the people of San Carlos, Payson, and Camp Verde. There are differences in language, history, and culture compared to the other Apache nations: the Chiricahua, Mescalero, Jicarrilla, Lipan, and Kiowa-Apache peoples. Like the Navajo, the Apache are an Athapaskan people, originating in the Northwest. Possibly a thousand years ago, the Apache migrated into the region.

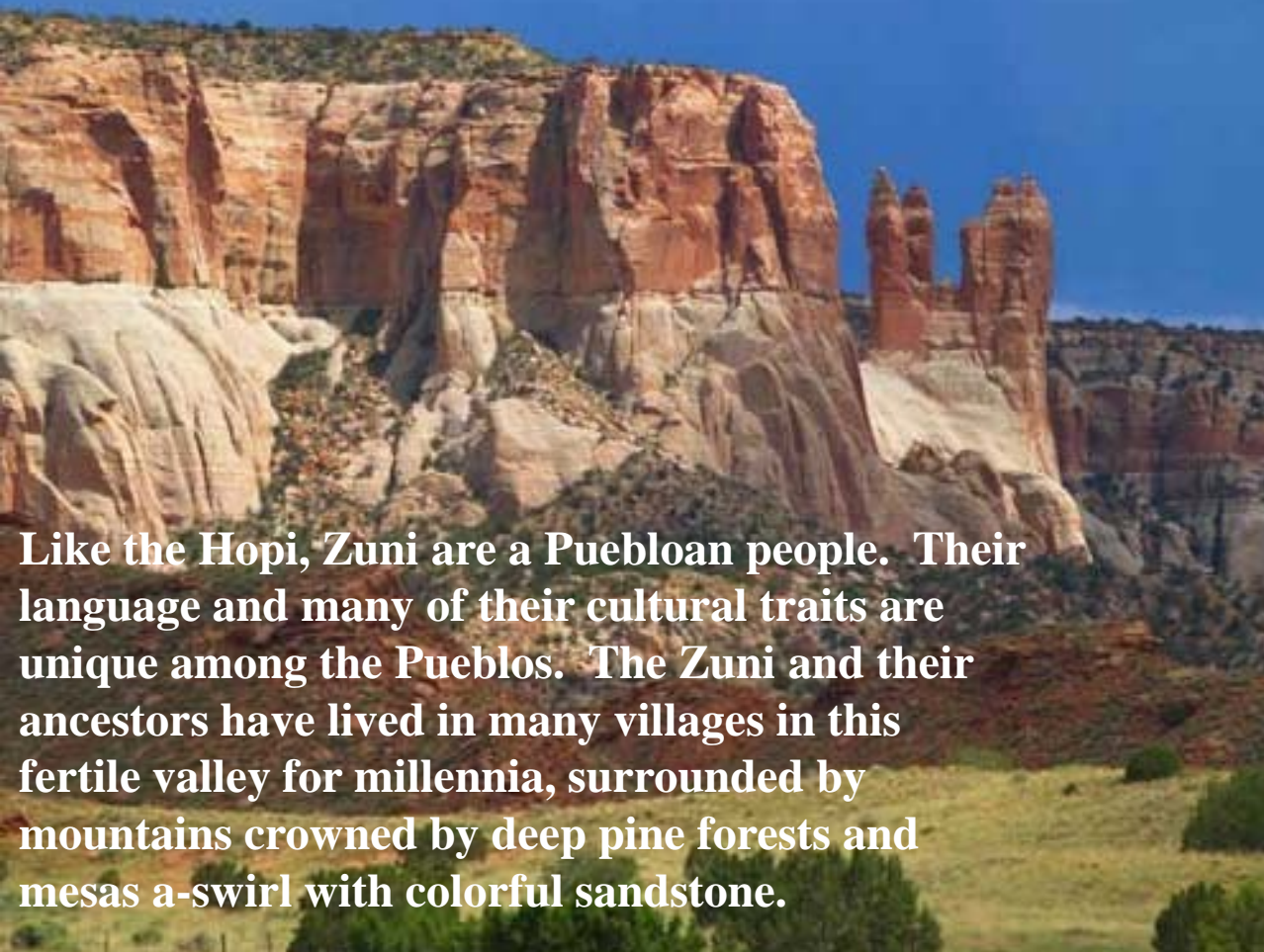
Traditionally, the White Mountain Apache people lived in family groups and bands, with homes and farms along major watercourses in the White Mountains and along the Mogollon Rim. They grew corn, sunflowers, beans, squash, and other crops, hunted game, and collected wild plant foods. Traveling widely, the Apache traded and raided throughout the region. The influx of settlers into the region, mainly during the 19th century, radically changed the lifeways of the Apache.



Today, the White Mountain Apache tribe consists of about 15,000 members. Artists create traditional beadwork and baskets, as well as modern paintings, sculpture, music, and writing, many supported by the Nohwike' Bagowa Museum. The tribal economy is based on timber, tourism, and recreational use of their beautiful homeland.



# The Zuni *A:shiwi*



Like the Hopi, Zuni are a Puebloan people. Their language and many of their cultural traits are unique among the Pueblos. The Zuni and their ancestors have lived in many villages in this fertile valley for millennia, surrounded by mountains crowned by deep pine forests and mesas a-swirl with colorful sandstone.

Many visitors enjoy hiking, boating, and fishing while others come to see the cultural and archaeological riches. Collectors from around the world come to Zuni where 80% of families are involved with art, including painters, carvers, and potters.



This sovereign, self-governed nation still follows a yearly cycle of traditional ceremonies. The Zuni belong to a vital community of tradition and progress.

